

**Joint Capital Planning Committee Minutes**

**10 a.m., Friday, March 11, 2011,  
Town Room, Town Hall**

**AGENDA**

1. Departmental requests
  - Municipal buildings & equipment
  - Elementary, region school buildings & equipment
2. Follow up on previous departmental requests, if any
3. Percent of net tax levy to allocate for capital plan
4. Approve minutes of Feb. 4, Feb. 11, and March 4, 2011, if available
5. Review next meetings

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- Convened: 10:00 a.m.

Present: Moran, Slaughter, Spence, Stein, McKee, Lewis, Wald;Hood (for Sanderson);  
Musante, Pooler

Clerk today: Wald

Appearances: Ron Bohanowicz on facilities

Ms. Moran announces that Ms. Sanderson will no longer be able to attend. Some discussion of consequences: effect on quorum in interim.

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**1. Departmental requests**

- Municipal buildings & equipment
- Elementary, region school buildings & equipment

Appearance by Ron Bohanowicz

**SCHOOLS**

Addressed FY 12 as well as individual projects within the schools. All are important, but it is possible to prioritize on grounds of safety or other urgency, allowing

- Replace one Special Ed van (\$28K: an absolute must)  
Town has been rotating through the fleet, bringing new vehicles online (NB some older ones go back into the fleet for other purposes [that may change if we become a Green Community; JW]). Important to note Needs are increasing; town is legally obligated to provide the transportation if parents cannot
- Wildwood kitchen equipment (\$20K), Fort River kitchen equipment (\$15K)  
The school facilities date from the 1970s, and the town has some of the last spare parts. Equipment at Fort River is being sequentially replaced.

Status: ideal would be to keep the replacement schedule going, but could be put off a year if necessary because there are funds from last year.

- Wildwood exterior doors (\$8500), • Fort River doors (\$ 8500):

Large, heavy-use doors deteriorating; this allows cold air out, water and rats in.  
Like other features, being replaced in sequence, but could be put off, if necessary

- Wildwood Courtyard (\$12K)

Originally intended as means of providing natural light, but surface is now permeable: vegetation grows, moisture is retained—but this is where the ventilators are, so they thus bring foul air into the interior. Work has been done at Fort River, parallel work needs to occur here.

Again, important for air quality, but could conceivably be postponed. He explains the extremely rigorous process, when tests are ordered, e.g. as a result of complaints. Fixing the courtyards would thus allow us to avoid having to go through this process so often.

- Hot water tank at Wildwood (\$ 12K)**PRIORITY**

Leaking: this is a safety issue ("if this tank goes, we close school today")

- Fort River Boiler (widely varying bids) asking for \$ 100K, though actual cost is higher, using grant and previous appropriations.

Conversion from oil to gas.

(a dual-fuel system would not be as efficient and would also require expensive chimney modifications)

Key=asbestos abatement (\$ 21K) and removal of old oil tank from ground (may be left for up to 2 yrs. w. permission of Fire Dept.)

Key points=financial savings as well as environmental benefit (reduction of greenhouse gases, etc.)

NB there will be "a huge payback on this project": will cover costs in 7 yrs.

Expect minimum/conservative estimate of \$30K in savings per year—but, based on extensive data, could be up to \$50K (once we see how actual ramping up of system works).

We will also get rebates from the gas company, though it's not possible to calculate exactly at this time.

Need to understand that this is then a \$50K saving for 30 years that, in effect, pays for a teacher.  
"We need to invest money in order to save money."

Mr. Musante suggests adding more explicit explanation of payback to both worksheet and narrative on the boiler replacement.

- Crocker Farm parking (\$ 25K)

Consolidation of Marks Meadow increased pressure elsewhere.

This will be contracted out rather than assigned to DPW.

Status/priority: could be postponed.

- Crocker Farm playing fields (\$ 15K)

Have encroached on wetlands.

Law allows three years, but would like to do sooner; NB must be done over summer.

A safety issue, too, to the extent that water flows into drive and ices over.

- Energy management upgrades: Constantly trying to improve efficiency by all means
- Interior upgrades (\$30K), e.g. for changing old 1970s carpeting, as in Wildwood, to vinyl tile
- Asbestos management:  
Always need to be prepared for that (e.g. as for boiler, which required abatement).  
The wisest thing is to try to contract out rather than train own people for this difficult and dangerous work.
- School Security (\$ 5K)
- Furniture replacement: totally absent from current budget

#### SUMMARY: ABSOLUTE NEEDS ('have to have')

- SPED Van
- Hot water tank
- \$150 K for Fort River
- Wetlands restoration
- Asbestos management
- Energy

Mr. Musante notes that, several years ago, we united facilities under single oversight and management, and now we are seeing the results.

We're saving a quarter of a million dollars on energy. We're working systematically to improve facilities (from walkway at Wildwood to windows). There is a real plan for preventive maintenance, and now we're moving on to interior matters.

"I just have a very high confidence level that when we're spending money, it's being put to good use. It's not fluff. There are real savings here."

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#### **TOWN**

- Town Hall HVAC upgrades (\$ 25K):  
To upgrade a software-controlled system as well as to take control of other parts (e.g. conflicts between cooling and heating/ventilation in same room at same time)
- Emergency Command Center generator (\$ 85K)  
Could be either natural gas or diesel.  
Currently using Police Station, which can be fully powered by generator.  
Given that key computing resources etc. are in Town Hall, it makes most sense to protect it and relocate that center here.  
Q. Ms. Moran asks re: location.  
A: would have to be outside on property and have smokestack, but has relatively small footprint (about size of half the table at which we meet).
- Police Station Interior (\$10K)
- Bangs Center Exterior (\$25K)  
The well-known issue re: pavement and safety. Had \$ 25K from last appropriation but need another \$ 25K in order to complete.  
Will be contracted out. Working closely with DPW, e.g. they will provide some electrical, the textured pavers for the blind, &c., but they cannot do the whole job.

- Parking Garage energy device.

Device apparently takes out spikes in power and yields net savings

(Mr. Musante: if we do fund it, we will find a way to do it through the Transportation Fund.)

- Energy management at Munson Library

- Building envelope repair (“the article that saves us from the unknown”)

#### SUMMARY: ABSOLUTE NEEDS (“have to have”)

- Energy for Town Hall (because it has payback)
- Bangs Center (because involves health and safety)
- Building envelope repair

Mr. Musante reminds us that one reason our Town requests are so small is that we—JCPC, Town Meeting, etc.—have made substantial investments over the years: preserving our facilities and winning other savings.

Mr. Musante also reminds us that sound oversight and critical review of town structures is part of his charge from the Select Board. The resultant compilation of historical and current information should prove to be a very valuable resource when we take up these subjects again next year.

Mr. Bohanowicz reminds us, incidentally, that the Police Station is now reaching the point at which we will need to keep a close eye on the roof (looks good now, but asphalt roofs generally have a lifetime of only 25-30 years).

## **2. Follow up on previous departmental requests, if any.**

[NONE]

## **3. Percent of net tax levy to allocate for capital plan**

Ms. Moran summarizes general information on the budget situation from other forums and discussions, in context of Governor’s new revenue estimate, and our more conservative one, which shows a lesser savings.

Mr. Musante’s spreadsheet on capital requests:

Current potential requests are about double the amount of money available for restorations and the like (deficit of about \$1 million)

Some extended discussion:

Last year involved an allocation of 6.25% to capital (before the Patterson project was withdrawn). To maintain that, would be another \$ 250,000 short.

(Need to subtract from that debt service; what is left: cash and projects.)

Mr. Musante: The goal has been for the capital budget to grow in proportion to the tax levy.

Ms. Moran notes that the percentage used has actually declined for the past four years, due to pressures from operating budgets (further: the override also included no funds for capital).

Mr. Pooler:

The tax levy makes up only about 60 percent of the budget, which means that capital is half of that, which is probably too low. Other communities having an AAA bond rating are probably spending closer to 8-10% of their tax levy on capital. In the long run, the Town needs to think carefully about allocation between capital and operating. If we don't put more into capital, "the must haves" will become "screaming" needs.

Ms. Moran reminds us that all this needs to be considered in collaboration with the Budget Coordinating Group.

Mr. Musante: We should start by thinking of the minimum number with which you are comfortable, then imagine staggered increases, e.g. what he developed with Select Board last week (about a net 1%+ budget increase). This would be a very good framework for future meetings, in which we try to prioritize.

Ms. Moran addresses some further questions about process (carts/horses, percentages vs. categories and amounts, etc.)

The aim would be to vote a plan by around April, which could include options/suggestions for cuts or restorations, depending on how state aid shakes out, so that we have an actual number for Town Meeting.

Mr. Musante: Perhaps start with a list that is 6% of the tax levy and then another that goes in the other direction, up to or above 6.25%, another \$ 250K. (We need to remember that we have also taken on some \$ 550K in road debt, but that is necessary and will save us millions down the road.)

• Adjourned: 11:38 a.m.

Documents used:

Facilities request forms for Town and Elementary Schools